

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE PATENT TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

SECURUS TECHNOLOGIES, INC.,
Petitioner,

v.

GLOBAL TEL*LINK CORPORATION,
Patent Owner.

Case IPR2017-01279
Patent 9,509,856 B2

Before KEVIN F. TURNER, BARBARA A. BENOIT, and
GEORGIANNA W. BRADEN, *Administrative Patent Judges*.

BRADEN, *Administrative Patent Judge*.

DECISION
Institution of *Inter Partes* Review
37 C.F.R. § 42.108

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Securus Technologies, Inc. (“Petitioner”) filed a Petition (Paper 1, “Pet.”) to institute an *inter partes* review of claims 1–20 of U.S. Patent No. 9,509,856 B2 (Ex. 1001, “the ’856 patent”). Global Tel*Link Corporation (“Patent Owner”) timely filed a Preliminary Response (Paper 5, “Prelim. Resp.”). We have authority under 35 U.S.C. § 314 and 37 C.F.R § 42.4(a), where section 314(a) provides that an *inter partes* review may not be instituted “unless . . . there is a reasonable likelihood that the petitioner would prevail with respect to at least 1 of the claims challenged in the petition.” *See* 37 C.F.R § 42.4(a) (delegating authority to institute trial to the Board).

Upon consideration of the Petition, Petitioner’s cited evidence, and Patent Owner’s Preliminary Response, we conclude Petitioner has established a reasonable likelihood it would prevail with respect to at least one of the challenged claims. Accordingly, for the reasons that follow, we institute an *inter partes* review.

B. Related Proceedings

The parties inform us that the challenged patent is the subject of a district court proceeding in the Northern District of Texas, captioned *Global Tel*Link Corp. v. Securus Techs., Inc.*, No. 3:16-cv-01338-K (N.D. Tex.). Pet. 67; Paper 4, 1 (Patent Owner’s Mandatory Notices).

C. The ’856 Patent

The ’856 patent was filed on April 17, 2015, and is titled “Telecommunication Revenue Management System.” Ex. 1001, Title. It describes systems and methods for using a revenue management system with

a telecommunication systems that includes a remote server, a user database, and a plurality of other databases. *Id.* at Abstract. According to the '856 patent, controlled facilities routinely implement collect call billing arrangements in their telephone systems to ensure payment for the call. *Id.* at 1:21–36. Some service providers for called parties, however, limit certain customer's ability to receive collect calls, while others are unwilling or unable to pursue their customers to collect on unpaid debts. *Id.* at 1:37–60. As a result, the '856 patent explains that controlled facilities had to choose between blocking collect calls to certain destination phone numbers (requiring the calling party to pay for the calls) or accepting the risk that the called party may never pay for the call. *Id.* at 1:30–2:5. According to the '856 patent use of a revenue management systems helps to manage the risk associated with un-billable telephone calls and the debt generated by calling activities, because the '856 patent allows a called party to set up a prepaid account to cover charges for calls. *Id.* at 1:16–19; 10:51–62; 11:11–41. Specifically, when certain conditions are met, the called party can create an account “in real time” while the calling and called parties are attempting to complete the telephone call.

One embodiment of the '856 patent is shown in Figure 4, reproduced below.

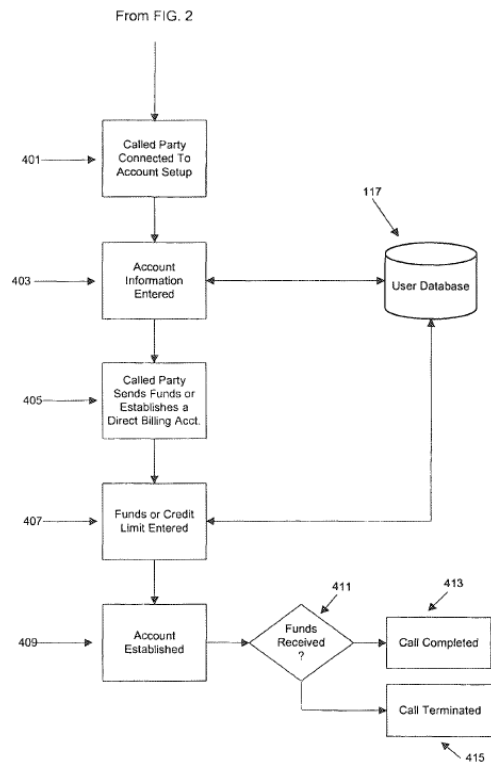


Figure 4 illustrates the steps for a user to setup an account with the revenue management system if the user does not have an account already. *Id.* at 10:20–24. According to the '856 patent, a called party gives account information and payment information to a revenue management system representative, who sets up and activates the account. *Id.* at 10:24–50. The '856 patent discloses that the account can be setup and activated while a calling party is still connected to the systems, so that if an account is successfully established in step 409 of Figure 4, then the call may be completed. *Id.* at 10:51–58. If, however, the funds for the account are not received and verified in step 411, then the call is terminated in step 415. *Id.* at 10:58–62.

D. Illustrative Claims

As noted above, Petitioner challenges claims 1–20 with claims 1, 9, and 15 being independent. Claim 1 is illustrative of the challenged claims, and is reproduced below:

1. A telecommunications management system, comprising:

a telephone management system configured to initiate a telephone call from a calling party to a called party, the called party being associated with a cellular telephone number; and
a revenue management system, in communication with the telephone management system, the revenue management system comprising:

a server configured to:

query a plurality of databases to determine whether the cellular telephone number is associated with an account,

query the plurality of databases to determine whether the cellular telephone number is billable,

direct the telephone management system to complete the telephone call in response to determining that the cellular telephone number is associated with an account and is billable,

direct the telephone management system to establish a new account associated with the cellular telephone number in real time while the calling party and the called party are attempting to complete the telephone call and then complete the telephone call once a new account has been established in response to determining that the cellular telephone number is not associated with an account and is billable, and

direct the telephone management system to terminate the telephone call in response to determining that the cellular telephone number is not billable.

Ex. 1001, 11:12–41.

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